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## Schwarzenegger vetoes stem cell bill

San Francisco Business Times - by [Ron Leuty](#)

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger vetoed SB 1565, aimed at making stem cell therapies and diagnostics funded by California's multibillion-dollar stem cell research agency affordable and accessible.

The bill also would have made it easier for the [California Institute for Regenerative Medicine](#) to fund research beyond politically charged embryonic stem cells.

In vetoing the bill Saturday, Schwarzenegger said SB 1565 would have undermined "the express intent of Proposition 71," which California voters approved in 2004, setting up a \$3 billion agency with state bonds.

Schwarzenegger said the bill would have eliminated the priority for funding human embryonic stem cell research and would have placed restrictions on CIRM's oversight committee to adopt intellectual property policies that balance patient need and medical research.

"More than 7 million voters were very clear when they passed Proposition 71 in 2004," Schwarzenegger said. "They wanted to fund embryonic stem cell research that the federal government wouldn't. They also wanted to make sure that California receives a return for its historic investment in medical research. Both of these important goals are already being accomplished.

"This bill does nothing to advance the will of over 7 million voters. For this reason, I am unable to sign this bill."

The effort to create CIRM was launched after President Bush's August 2001 restrictions on federally funded embryonic stem cell studies because the process requires the destruction of human embryos.

SB 1565 was sponsored by Sen. Sheila Kuehl, a Santa Monica Democrat, and George Runner, a Republican from Antelope Valley. It had breezed through the Assembly and the Senate since its introduction Feb. 22.

Kuehl has long pressed CIRM for increased accountability and to codify — beyond CIRM's policy — that stem cell therapies and diagnostics funded by the agency be affordable and accessible to uninsured Californians.

Runner has been an avowed opponent of embryonic stem cell research. His amendment would have allowed CIRM's scientific and medical research funding working group — which includes 15 scientists who review, score and rank grant and loan applications — to allow a simple majority vote to push forward non-embryonic stem cell research.

That research already can receive federal funding. But adult stem cell research has picked up support over the past year, after Shinya Yamanaka, now a part-time researcher at the [J. David Gladstone Institutes](#) in San Francisco, and others induced some adult skin cells to change into embryonic-like stem cells.

Runner's amendment also may have made it easier for researchers at [Stanford University](#), the University of California, San Francisco, the Gladstone Institutes and the Children's Hospital Oakland Research Institute to land more funding for their efforts to manipulate adult stem cells into embryonic-like stem cells or work with umbilical cord blood cells.

One of SB 1565's aims already is coming to pass, though. The Little Hoover Commission, an independent, bipartisan state oversight commission, said Sept. 25 that it will study CIRM .

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